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Doc Acquis / OCLC Firstsearch

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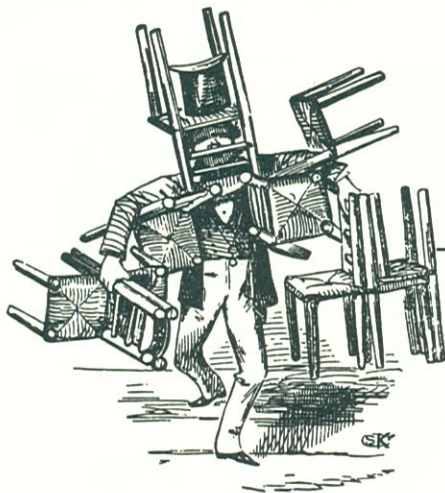


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New Feature!

DOC AQUIS . . .

a column reporting on news and developments relating to acquisitions and document delivery

Column Editors: **Mary McLaren** and
Barbara Hale (U. of Kentucky)

Send comments, information, etc. to the editors — The University of Kentucky, Margaret I. King Library, Lexington, Kentucky 40506-0039. FAX (606)257-1563.

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION: The FirstSearch Catalog

The service to be highlighted in this DocAquis column is The FirstSearch Catalog, OCLC's reference product for library patrons. Although FirstSearch provides access to approximately 40 commercial databases, this article will focus primarily on services provided by the 3 databases which are exclusive OCLC offerings — WorldCat (the OCLC Online Union Catalog), ArticleFirst, and ContentsFirst. Information provided in this Product Description was gathered from a composite of OCLC publications.

The WorldCat database is a convenient tool for locating items held at your library or libraries around the world. Electronically merging more than 29 million records from 15,000 libraries, WorldCat includes records for books, computer files and programs, maps, scores, journals, newspapers, and audio-visual formats. Libraries choosing to activate the ordering function can accept electronic interlibrary loan forms from their patrons who have identified items they need on loan. It must be noted, however, that individual articles from magazines, journals and newspaper and book chapters are not included in the WorldCat database.

For information relating to specific journal and newspaper articles, news stories and letters, patrons would want to access the ArticleFirst (Article1st) database. This database contains records which list items on the table of contents pages of individual journal issues. In addition to the bibliographic citation, many records also contain an abstract, and each record contains a list of OCLC libraries that own the journal. Included in its coverage of over 11,500 journals are articles, editorials, news stories, letters, reviews, and other items.

The third component of the OCLC database triad is the ContentsFirst (Contents1st) database. This database contains the complete table of contents pages from individual issues of the journals cited in ArticleFirst. These include journals in science, technology, medicine, social science, business, the humanities, and popular culture. Each record lists the table of contents of one journal issue. Most of the journals are published in English, but some journals in other languages are also indexed. As with ArticleFirst, records in ContentsFirst also indicate the libraries, including your own, that hold the journal title accessed.

Delivery Options

Citations in most FirstSearch databases are linked to OCLC holding symbols, with WorldCat and ArticleFirst linked to the PRISM ILL subsystem. Use of the optional interlibrary loan link enables patrons in OCLC member libraries to complete an online interlibrary loan request and send it to their library's ILL review file. At this point the library's ILL staff reviews the request and decides on the best way to fill it.

Two methods of receiving the requested items are borrowing it from another library or buying it from a document supplier. FirstSearch records provide at least 2 document suppliers for a growing number of databases and lists applicable prices. Patrons may choose to order items directly, pay by credit card, and have the item sent directly to them. Or the library can set up an account and have the documents sent to them. Delivery options include First Class Mail, Rush Overnight, or FAX. The newest delivery option implemented in February ('94) is

called FastDoc, an option which provides fax delivery of articles in 1 hour or less. FastDoc is presently available for 750 journals on 2 FirstSearch databases, ArticleFirst and Periodicals Abstracts. OCLC has said that it plans to extend the FastDoc option to virtually all the FirstSearch databases by 1995.

Planned Enhancements

The following enhancements are planned as part of FirstSearch version 3.0, with an estimated release date of late Summer '94.

- > **Full-text online:** This enhancement will be available to all FirstSearch users. UMI will be the first supplier, and ASCII text will be featured. Eventually full-text online will be linked to most FirstSearch databases. E-mail delivery will be an option. Payment options will be flexible so that a library can share costs.
- > **Holdings control:** This enhancement will allow libraries to take their holdings off. The default will be the current display. Group holdings will be accepted.
- > **"OR" operator:** The addition of the "OR" operator is in response to strong user demand. Since "OR" requires considerable computer resources for processing, some limits, as yet undecided, will be implemented with the "OR" operator.
- > **Document ordering/ILL:** A matrix of suppliers and prices will be available on a single screen.

- > **Free practice database:** A free practice database will be added, probably for WorldCat.

Accessibility:

Technical aspects regarding patron access to the FirstSearch files also offer options. Patrons can access FirstSearch in the library via microcomputers, local system terminals, dumb terminals, or OCLC workstations. Additionally, a library may choose to tie FirstSearch into its own LAN in order to provide remote access to its patrons. Connections to the system can include OCLC dedicated line, Internet, and dial access via a value-added network such as CompuServe or SprintNet.

One additional user friendly feature

of FirstSearch is its common user interface. This feature allows patrons to search all the FirstSearch databases using virtually the same protocol. Libraries can choose to use either the FirstSearch Interface or their own local system's interface. FirstSearch is Z39.50-1992 compatible, which means that if the library's local system is Z39.50 compatible, it can "talk" to FirstSearch. Patrons would then be able to search multiple databases from the OPAC terminals using the interface they are accustomed to.

For additional information and pricing options contact your OCLC-affiliated Regional Network or call the OCLC National Sales Division at 1-800-848-5878 (US and Canada) or 1-800-848-8286 (Ohio only).



...Doc Acquis ...

ONE LIBRARY'S RESPONSE: FirstSearch Networked at UNCG

by **April Wreath**, Systems Librarian,
The University of North Carolina,
Greensboro

FirstSearch has been available at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro since late August of 1993 as a menu option on Jackson Library's Networked DRA online public access catalog. Only members of the UNCG community who have a valid ID may access the service.

The initial challenge of implementing FirstSearch was to understand the pricing of various options which OCLC provides for searching, and to determine the advantages and disadvantages inherent to each approach — subscription, cards, or open block. A subscription appeared to be fairly expensive and put restrictions on the number of simultaneous users. Cards posed concerns for record keeping, distribution, and potential loss or under utilization. Therefore, UNCG decided to buy open blocks of 500 searches as the most desirable choice.

Determining the number of blocks to purchase was an even more perplexing task. At the time of planning for FirstSearch there were few studies available that could suggest the amount of usage we might anticipate in a networked environment. Thus, in the spirit of experimentation, we settled upon 60 blocks, or 30,000 searches for public access via

the online catalog, and 20 blocks of 10,000 searches with a separate password for library staff use only.

OCLC also allows three options for accessing FirstSearch: the Internet, dedicated line, or dial access. To make FirstSearch widely distributed through the online catalog, the Internet was the logical choice.

FirstSearch has been a great success during the six months in which UNCG has offered it, if success is to be measured in terms of numbers of searches. The response was immediately enthusiastic and usage simply "exploded" from the very first days it was introduced.

By October, CARL UnCover was also made available from the online catalog's menu. This additional resource appeared to divert some of the demand from FirstSearch, but by no means caused its usage to drop to a level where we felt our initial purchase of 30,000 searches would last until the end of the academic year. Thus, in December the library purchased 50,000 more searches. At the time of this writing (late February) 29,054 of the original 30,000 public searches have been consumed, which is an average of 4,842 searches per month.

However, we do not know yet how effectively FirstSearch is being used. A pilot study questionnaire administered to graduate students who had received

training by the Head of the Reference Department indicates that 66% were satisfied with the results of their searches. An amazing 89% found FirstSearch easy to use. Preliminary statistics gathered also revealed that graduate students have been the highest users of FirstSearch at UNCG, followed by faculty, then undergraduates, then staff.

The features which we have found most appealing about FirstSearch are: 1) the scope of coverage of its databases — especially in the sciences; 2) the organization of databases by subject areas; 3) the availability of WorldCat, which has been its most frequently used database; 4) the relative ease of use for most patrons; 5) flexibility for purchasing and making the service available; 6) good documentation; 7) availability of online help. Additionally, it is an advantage that once a hit list displays it is possible to look at all of its entries without incurring further charges.

The administrative module is easy to use, and statistics are available from OCLC showing the number of accesses to each database. We also welcome the ability to block access to certain databases if we can offer them in a more cost effective way, or if they are out of scope for the majority of our patrons' needs. While FirstSearch has the capability of setting a "time out", we have found that

the only choice offered of five minutes is too long in a setting where FirstSearch is one of several menu choices. Patrons are sometimes confused at seeing the remains of a search after a user has left the terminal. The potential for accessing FirstSearch using the Z39.50 protocol is also viewed as a plus, although we understand that it requires much work on technical details between OCLC and the local site to achieve this end.

Those aspects of searching FirstSearch which we feel most need improvement are its lack of the "or" component for true Boolean, and its lack of truncation.

Although the free access to FirstSearch via the Internet provides a

major budgetary advantage, it is not without some problems. Typically, response time slows in the afternoons, and there are also times when there are difficulties making a connection. When this happens users either cannot get into the service or their connections are dropped while searching. Needless to say, this situation creates a great deal of frustration and some added expense if searches need to be reentered.

However, our greatest disappointment with FirstSearch has been the limitations placed on downloading to diskette. To be user friendly, FirstSearch should support commonly used communications software such as Kermit or Procomm, rather than work only through Passport.

The added restriction of downloading only five records at a time is also not a reasonable one from the perspective of most users.

Since making FirstSearch available we have already witnessed an exponential growth of interlibrary loan requests. An ILL component is available through FirstSearch, but UNCG has elected not to use it. With the popularity of FirstSearch already well established, we are now preparing to administer a survey from the online catalog which will help us to understand better its effectiveness, the degree to which further training may be needed, and how to budget to support its demand.

...Doc Acquis ...

Have You Heard?

OCLC will be developing an **Interlibrary Loan Reimbursement System** at the urging of the Users Council. The lender reimbursement system will help reduce the administrative costs for li-

braries that charge or pay other libraries for interlibrary loan. The system will be developed for OCLC's PRISM Interlibrary Loan service. The system will be optional and used on a request-by-re-

quest basis when libraries are arranging a transaction with a library that charges. When the reimbursement system is invoked, the borrowing library is debited and the lender is issued a credit. OCLC

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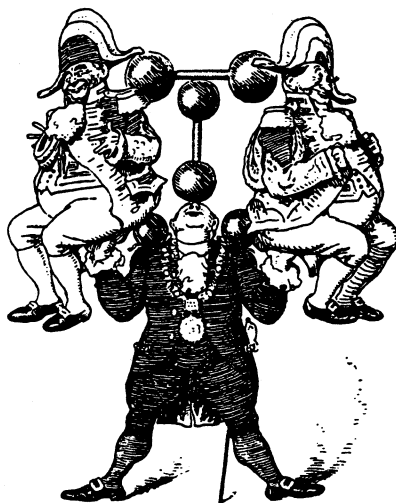
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will reconcile debits and credits on a monthly basis and send credits to net lenders and bills to net borrowers. For more information call Nita Dean (614) 761-5002.

Data Research announced the industry's first on-line, Z39.50 access to databases from **Cambridge Scientific Abstracts**. Fast and user-friendly access is made possible by loading the database on a Z39.50-compliant server running on Digital Equipment Corporation's high-speed 4000 Model 610 Alpha AXP computer, located in their St. Louis corporate headquarters. Any library can access the computer (with or without a Data Research System) via Open DRANET, Data Research's state-of-the-art networking service. Specific Cambridge Scientific databases include Environmental Sciences and Pollution Management; Marine Biology; **INDEX:** Worldwide Market Research; and Expanded Life Sciences Collection with Bioengineering. For more information (remote access options, 30 day free trial) contact Michael Miyazaki, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts, (301) 961-6761.

CARL Corporation introduces **Uncover Complete**, an expansion of UnCover's document delivery service. Uncover Complete will allow you to order items from any journal title included in UnCover, even if it is not indexed in the database, for example, older articles, letters to the editor, book reviews and regular columns without unique titles. An online order form will require you to enter all the necessary information about the item, i.e., author, article title, volume, enumeration and page number(s). You use the current ordering mechanism to have the article faxed to you within 24 hours. The Uncover Company also announces that **three significant new library collections have been added to the UnCover Database:** UCLA's Biomedical and Physical Science and Technology libraries, Lane Medical Library of Stanford University, and the College Park campus of the University of Maryland. The libraries now provide table of contents and serve as supply sites for the fax-based delivery service. For more information contact the UnCover Company, 3801 East Florida, Denver CO 80210. Voice: 303-758-3030; Fax: 303-758-5946; e-mail: uncover@carl.org.

OCLC announces **ContentsAlert**,



which delivers serials tables of contents automatically via electronic mail from the Internet. E-mail messages sent to the ContentsAlert service specifying the table of contents you want and the patron or library e-mail addresses to which they go will trigger ContentsAlert to mail the table of contents for each new issue to each specified address until you tell it to stop. For information on how it works, prices and other information contact your OCLC-affiliated Regional Network or call the OCLC National Sales Division at these toll-free numbers: USA & Canada: 1-800-848-5878, Ohio only 1-800-848-8286.

A new collection development tool available from **Brodart Collection Development** is called **TIPS: Title Information Preview Service**. TIPS is a collection development program that provides enhanced bibliographic information plus full text reviews from *Library Journal*, *School Library Journal* and *Publishers Weekly*. The comprehensive selection list is based upon the selection criteria, frequency, and format options chosen by the library. For more information, contact your local Brodart sales representative or call 1-800-233-8467.

CASPR, Inc. announces that the **Newton MessagePad Personal Digital Assistant** from Apple Computer can now be used by libraries for inventory control with **LibraryWorks**, the integrated library system for the Macintosh and Windows computers. Barcode numbers can be scanned, stored, and transferred from Newton to the circulation component of the LibraryWorks program. Barcode numbers are checked against the library's collection to determine the

inventory or circulation status. Newton has the capacity to store over 10,000 items in each scanning session. For more information on these products, call CASPR at 800-852-2777.

SIRSI Corporation is pleased to announce an agreement among SIRSI, The Faxon Company, and the University of Minnesota, Duluth (UMD) to develop and test an **X12 facility** between SIRSI systems and Faxon. The beta testing of the interface will be conducted at UMD. SIRSI and Faxon are using three ANSI X12 formats for electronic data exchange: invoice, claims, and claim responses. These formats have been defined and approved by SISAC. The X12 facility will enable customers to exchange information electronically with serial subscriptions providers, eliminating vast amounts of paperwork and expediting processes associated with serials acquisitions.

NOTIS Systems, Inc. announced a strategic alliance with **SilverPlatter Information, Inc.** which will dramatically expand NOTIS Systems' **database offerings** for users of its **Z39.50-compliant database server, InfoShare**. To expand its database collection, NOTIS Systems will be incorporating SilverPlatter's search engine into InfoShare's Z39.50 structure. This enhancement will enable users to search any SilverPlatter database using the same search techniques.

News from **Yankee, YBP**, includes: plans for a summer '94 release of **FO-LIO 2.1**, YBP's online service which will include, among other features, access to their serials standing title file with order capability; news that they have completed the first phase of testing **paperback approval plan services**; completion of **prototype testing** (with evaluation now underway) of an **automatic cataloging service for approval materials** among OCLC, YBP, and **Michigan State University**; exploration of use of ANSI X12 data communications; and the ongoing development of a **prototype British Approval Plan** to supply UK books to US academic libraries. For more information call Gary Shirk at 800-258-3774 or e-mail at gshirk@office.ybp.com.

News from **Dynix** includes the offering of a new option for libraries planning to automate called the "Library

You Gotta Go to School for That?

All My Librarians

by Jerry Seay (College of Charleston)

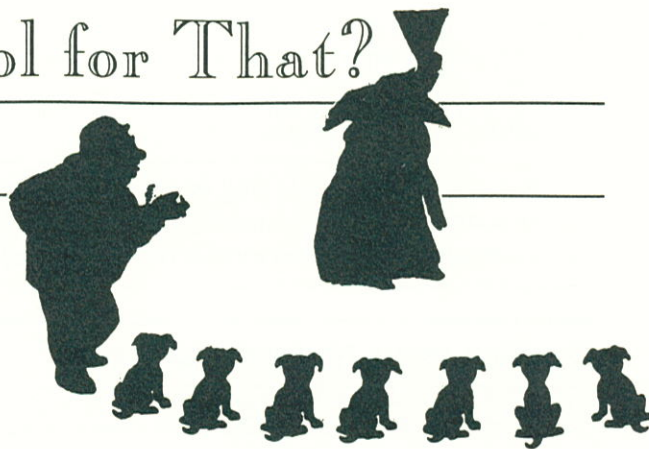
In the never ending struggle to make my life more exciting I found myself reading the soap opera section of the newspaper. Of course this was on a purely research basis. It is called "Speaking of Soaps" and is a weekly digest of all the story lines and shenanigans in last weeks soaps. Have any of you folks out there read this stuff?

Now you and I know that anything that happens at a library is at least twice as exciting and bizarre as what happens on a daily soap opera. So, I'm thinking — why not produce a library soap opera? Just think of the incredible plot twists and strange relationships that you and I take for granted everyday. I'm seeing major television production here. Why, just think of the Biblio Soaps you could see. . .

This week on **All My Librarians** —

Marlene in acquisitions is overwhelmed by book orders and vents her frustration at video poker bars while Victoria punches out the UPS man for knocking over a box of orders that had taken her hours to file. Katina, though still trapped under a pile of books and papers that fell off her desk, is floored to learn that the firm order budget is mysteriously missing thousands of dollars. "Wild" Bill, meanwhile, has suddenly been enjoying new purchases in Special Collections including a Jacuzzi and a marble pool table which he explains simply as special "gifts." Tom's wild relationship with Bambi is nearly revealed at the reference desk when Phil overhears Jannette talking about a certain kinky patron she knows that "really digs reference librarians." In a committee meeting Sheila shocks everybody when she announces that she has better things to do. Bob startles Bill at the new color copier running off twenty dollar bills and muttering something about fixing his budget. David, the library director, goes to France and secretly spends three nights camped out at Jim Morrison's grave. Interlibrary Loan is rocked by the news that half of the requests received this year are fake and have been turned in by a mysterious man who has been living in the library basement and creating ILL forms from potato sacks.

Sound familiar? I tell you the world is ready for the real exciting, seamy, surreal stories that exist behind the scenes in



today's libraries. And soap operas are only the beginning. For years lawyers, police, teachers and bartenders have had their professions splashed all over television. Well, I say that librarians deserve equal time. What better way to create a pseudo-truthful, yet flashy and sexy, image of one's profession? I see an entire genre of library television in the future. Imagine if you will:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Sitcoms: | "All in the Library" |
| Action dramas: | "Library Vice" |
| Real life drama: | "Library 911" |
| Science fiction: | "Biblio 5-Deep Space Library" |
| Westerns: | "Little Library on the Prairie" |
| Comedy: | "Library Bloop and Blunders" |
| Documentaries: | "Librarians or Publishers: Who is really sexier?" |

And what any child of the global village is truly waiting for:

"Access versus Ownership: The Mini Series"

Of course, the next step would be the big screen. I can see the opening credits now as they appear over a shot of Daniel Day-Lewis running shirtless through row after row of book stacks. The music builds to a crescendo as he leaps over a book truck and the title of the movie burns into the screen — "The Last of the Librarians." ☞

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Automation Center". This innovative alternative approach to automation is available to libraries who desire the benefits of automation without getting into the computer business. The Library Automation Center is completely provided and maintained by Dynix, including cen-

tral site hardware, software, and telecommunications equipment. The library provides only the database and the desire to automate. Libraries can join for a small initial setup charge and an annual rental fee based on the number of workstations, the desired software, and line-usage costs. Currently Dynix has one center already in full operation and is in the process of implementing a second. For more information on the Dynix Au-

tomation Center, contact Deborah Wheatley at 216-285-4588.

And just as we go to press, we learned that **The FirstSearch Catalog Document Ordering/ILL System** has been named winner of the **1994 Computers in Libraries Information Product/Service (CLIPS) Award**, which was presented during the **Computers in Libraries Conference** in Washington, D.C. ☞